A SERMON

PREACHED before the

King and Queen,

At *WHITEHAL*,

On Good-Friday, 1690.

By the Lord Bishop of *ROCHESTER*,
Dean of *WESTMINSTER*.

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1 St. *Peter*, Chap. 2.
Part of 21ſt, and 22d Verſes.

Chriſt alſo ſuffer'd for us, leaving us an Example, that ye ſhould follow his Steps, Who did no Sin.

THE Subject of our Devout Meditations on this Bleſſed Day, is our dear Redeemer's Paſſion; and the laſt moſt bitter part of it, his *humbling himſelf* ſo, as *to become Obedient to Death, even the Death of the Croſs*; *and the Preaching of this Croſs*, though (as St. *Paul* tells us) *To them that Periſh it is Fooliſhneſs*, yet he alſo aſſures us, *to as many as are Saved, it is the Power of God.* Philip. 2. 8. 1 Cor. 1. 23.

Now that none of Us ſhould be found in the number of thoſe, who *Periſh* by fooliſhly deſpiſing the Doctrine of a Crucified Saviour, but rather that we may all be wiſe to Salvation,

by meekly adoring this Power of God, and the wondrous Depths of Divine Love in it, and by rightly applying the unſpeakable Fruits of it to our ſelves, our Church has taken all imaginable care to repreſent it to us in the moſt ſerious and efficacious manner, and to fix it firmly on our Minds and Conſciences, by frequent and affectionate Repetitions of all its Parts and Aggravations.

So that if we ſhall reflect on the whole Annual Circle of our Publick Devotions, 'twere eaſie to obſerve, that our Saviour's Sufferings are therein oftner reiterated, and more in proportion, inſiſted on, than perhaps any other Article of our *pure and undefiled Religion*: Our Church in this, as in all things elſe, exactly following the Bleſſed Pattern of the firſt, and pureſt Ages, as they did the Goſpel of Chriſt; which ſeems to diſpenſe, and meaſure out to us, the benefits of all Spiritual Truths, even of

his Glorious Resurrection it self, only according as we shall lay hold on the Merits of, and be conformable to his Death. For so, (among many other Scriptures to the like purpose) we read, That *if we have been planted together in the likeness of his Death*; if so, and upon no other terms, then *we shall be also planted in the likeness of his Resurrection.* Rom. 6. 5.

Wherefore in order to this, and to introduce, as at this time, the Passion of Christ with the greater Solemnity, well did the Church Ordain, That the certain Period of our Regular Abstinence, and Repentance every Year, should immediately go before this particular Season; wisely judging, the severest Mortifications of our selves, to be the best Preparations for our meeting worthily our Lord dying, and rising again for us; and that some more than ordinary Method of Zealous Piety, and Stricter Retirement from the World,

was necessary to fit us duly for a Time, and Commemoration so Sacred.

Nay farther yet, When the very Day of his dying did nearer approach, to shew what ought to be the chief Matter of our Private Contemplations, as well as Publick Worship, during the whole Week preceding, (which has been therefore remarkably honour'd with the Venerable Name of *The Holy Week*,) has not our Excellent *Liturgy*, Day by Day, without Intermission, with a Succession of Divine Offices, the like not enjoin'd us in any other Week of the Year, continually repeated and inculcated on our Memories this one charming Truth, That *our Lord, our Love, was Crucified?* So that scarce any thing else has all this while sounded in our Ears, in these Holy Places, but some one or other step of our Saviour's sad, and dolorous passage to the *Field of Blood*; till now at length we are brought thither, and to

the

the very Day, when *He cried out, It is finiſh'd, and gave up the Ghoſt.* St. John 19. 30.

We having been ſo lately conducted through this wholeſome courſe of Severities and Contritions, all teaching us to Die to Sin, as our Lord Died now for our Sins; I cannot but believe, that what had been elſe the proper Buſineſs of the Preacher on this Day, is already in great part here done to my Hands; that You are all come hither tenderly affected with a deep Senſe, and melting Remorſe, for what Chriſt ſuffer'd, as at this time in our ſtead.

And if, by GOD's Grace, Your Hearts are thus already touch'd from above, then all that is left for me to do, will be only to aſſiſt You, not ſo much in raiſing, as in directing to the beſt Uſes, Your Devout Affections already rais'd: To conſult together with You, in the Fear of GOD, how all this Grief, and Sorrow, which ſo deſervedly

ly poſſeſſes Your Souls, may become a true Chriſtian Grief, and Godly Sorrow; How by Degrees we may advance it into Spiritual Gratitude, Hope, Love, Zeal, and *Full Aſſurance of Faith*; and at laſt into *Joys unſpeakable, and full of Glory*: Which, as ſure as God is true, will come to paſs in the event, if we ſhall make his precious Death and Paſſion, not only the ſteady Object of our Belief and Admiration in thoſe parts of it, wherein we cannot imitate Him; but alſo of our unwearied Imitation, and conſtant Practiſe in thoſe Things, wherein he *left* behind him *an Example*, for *us to follow his Steps*.

So you ſee it is, that my Text inſtructs us, in the only ſaving way of Contemplating our dear Lord's Sufferings; that we ſhould conſider them not only in themſelves, and their Cruel and Lamentable Circumſtances, but in their Gracious Ends, Influences and Powers:

As

As Christ was the Person *Suffering*; as he *suffer'd so much*, and as he suffer'd *for us*: *For us*, as an unvaluable Randsom to atone GOD's Justice, that we may relie on it; *For us*, as an unblameable Original of Meekness, Holiness, Charity, and Resignation to the Will of GOD, that we may Copy after it.

In these few Words therefore, we behold our LORD's Passion display'd to our View, in its brightest Glory, its condescending Humility, its most obliging Endearments, and its principal Uses.

First, Its *Glory*, in that it was *Christ* who *suffer'd*; *Jesus the Christ*, *the Christ of God*, who is *Lord of all things*, *the Lord and Giver of Life*: That the same Person, who was Anointed a King to Govern the whole World, and Ordain'd a Prophet to Teach, should be also Consecrated a Priest to sacrifice for it, Himself being the *Oblation*. St. Matt. 16. 20. St. Luk. 9. 10.

That is the Second, and was the Lowness of His *Humility*; which is here sty-

led

led His *Suffering*: Expreſſing, in one word, His patient enduring all that Miſery, and Torment, which not only the Malice of wicked Men, or the Rage of Hell diſappointed by Him, but the Wrath of GOD provoked, could inflict on Him, not in the leaſt on His own Account, but only for our ſakes.

Which next follows, and is the moſt endearing part of all, that *He ſuffer'd for us*; the Creator for the Creatures; *the* 1 St. Pet. 3. 18. *Juſt for the Unjuſt*; the Judge for the Criminals: Yet *for us*, loaded with all this Weight of our Guilt, and with all theſe juſt Cauſes of His Prejudice, he *ſuffered*, for our Juſtification, for our Salvation; but in the mean time, and in order to that, for our *Example!*

And laſtly, The Excellency of *the Example, he has left us to follow*, is ſpecified in ſuch an eminent Inſtance, that *He did no Sin*, as would indeed make us utterly to deſpair of ever following it, were it not

for his Grace ſtrengthning us, his Mercy forgiving us, and his Spirit ſupporting us: All which he has faithfully promis'd, and *no Guile was ever found in his Mouth.* Chap. 2. verſ. 22.

The firſt Particular in my Text, wherein the Grace of our LORD's Paſſion is magnifi'd, is, that the Perſon now ſuffering was *the Chriſt of God.*

I need not here ſtay to enumerate diſtinctly the many High Prerogatives, and Glorious Appellations, which are heap'd on this great Perſon, as he was *the Chriſt*, throughout the Holy Scriptures; whereof *He* was *the Alpha, and Omega, the Beginning, and the Ending*; firſt the Myſtery, then the Manifeſtation; that to the Jewiſh Church under the Law; this to the whole World under the Goſpel. Rev. 1. 8.

It may ſuffice, that all over this inſpir'd Book, He is amply declar'd to be, what the Author to the *Hebrews* has Divinely contracted into few words, *The Son of God*; *The only begotten of God*; *The Heir*

of all Things; The Lord of Glory; The very Brightness of his Fathers Glory; The express Image of his Person, full of Grace and Truth;
Hebr. 1. *by whom He made the Worlds, upholding all Things by the Word of his Power:* All unconceivably splendid, and triumphant Attributes; and all these directly tending to, and chiefly exercis'd in, our Pardon, and Peace. For so it presently
Vers. 3. follows, that *when by himself he had purg'd our Sins,* then, and not till then, *He sate down on the Right Hand of the Majesty on High.*

This then was *the Christ,* appointed before all Time, coming in the fulness of Time, sent from the Bosom of his Heavenly Father, by his Death to raise us from the Death of Sin; whereof our first, and Temporal Death, was the fatal Consequence; and our second Eternal Death, had been else the irreparable Punishment.

A Design this was of Pity and Compassion, whose *Heigth, Depth, Length and*

Breadth, were ſo Incomprehenſible, that nothing leſs could be ſufficient, than an Infinite Wiſdom to contrive it, and Power to effect it, and Love to accept of it.

By this one Adorable Counſel, Heaven and Earth, that were themſelves ſo vaſtly diſtant, and whoſe diſtance our Sins had widened ſo much more, were to be join'd, and for ever Reconciled: *Mercy and Truth were to meet together, Righteouſneſs and Peace to kiſs each other:* There was to be an Atonement on the one part, a Forgiveneſs on the other: Satisfaction was to be made by the Free Sufferings of a Man; Salvation to be beſtow'd by the Free Grace of GOD. Wherefore both Natures, the Human, and the Divine, were to be United in one *Chriſt*. Pſalm 85. 10.

And ſince GOD was pleas'd to dignifie our Mortal Condition, ſo highly, by this near Conjunction, he made our Nature in his *Chriſt*, as Glorious, and Perfect, as it was capable to be.

The Preparations for his Appearance, the Signs that foretold him, the Wonders that made way for him, his Perſonal Perfections, his Teaching, his Actions, his Sufferings, did all exceed all Meaſures of Human Greatneſs or Benignity.

So Sacred was his Authority, that all other True Divine Teachers, from the beginning of the World to his Birth, though they had gone before him in the Fleſh, yet received their Power, and Commiſſion from him by the Spirit. Whatever Wonders they wrought, whatever Truths they taught, all was done, and ſpoken with relation to him, and in ſubſervience to his Religion.

We know, that not only he himſelf, but even his Types, Forerunners, and Shadows, had many of them, the Privilege of working Miracles, the Gift of altering the common Courſe of Nature, and controuling the ſetled Laws of the Creation,

Creation, as they pleas'd. The Prophets had it: *Moſes* had it above all others. Yet they all had it only with dependance on him, and by a Title deriv'd from him; as they were his Figures, Miniſters, and Subſtitutes; to prepare, and enable the World, by Degrees, to receive this *Great Myſtery of Godlineſs, God manifeſted in the Fleſh*; This laſt, and univerſal Declaration of *Life, and Immortality brought to Light in the Goſpel by Him*, the Meſſias.

1 Tim. 3. 16.

2 Tim. 1. 10.

I know that Meſſias cometh, who is called Chriſt; and when he is come, he will teach us all things, ſaid the *Samaritan* Woman in St. *John* the 4th, and Verſ. 25. And in the ſame Chapter ſaid many of the *Samaritans, Now we have heard him our ſelves, we know that this is indeed the Chriſt, the Saviour of the World*, Verſ. 42. And the ſame St. *John*, who loved him moſt, and therefore probably knew him beſt, (for the greateſt Love of GOD is the beſt way to the greateſt Knowledge of him.)

The

St. John 1. 41. *The Messias*, (says he) *is, being interpreted, the Christ*: The very *Messias*, whom the *Jewish* Nation, all the Wise, Devout and Inspired part of it; all the time it was a True Church, so earnestly expected, and desired; as he was to be afterwards also *the Desire of all Nations*.

They long before beheld him, though but darkly, in the Visions and Intimations to their Fathers, the Characters and Inspirations of their Prophets, the Veils of their Ceremonies and Sacrifices, the Ornaments of their Temple, the Office of their *High Priests*; which were all, as the Law it self was, *only Shadows of good things to come*, whereof *He was the Body*; they had all a borrowed Meaning, and Mystical End; they were all fixt on the Great *Messias*; by Him they were Illustrated; and in Him alone they were all Consummated.

Coloss. 2. 17. Hebr. 10. 1.

By the United Expectation of the *Jews* all along, according to the Prophet *Daniel's*

niel's Prediction, and no doubt by a right Tradition, antienter than that, their *Messias* was to appear after the Captivity, and before the Destruction of their Temple and Nation. They themselves, just then, when Christ came, did instantly, and every Moment, expect his coming. All their Circumstances agreed in that time: All their Descriptions concenter'd in his Person: All their Prophecies than gave over; the End of them all being in him once obtain'd. And that People has since had no more visible Communion with GOD, which had so much before.

The Scepter was not to depart from Judah, *nor a Law-Giver from between his Feet, till* Shiloh *should come:* The Scepter just then did depart from *Judah*: Their Temple was shortly after destroy'd; and their Nation irrecoverably hitherto scatter'd. Wherefore, this our Christ must Infallibly have been the same with their *Shiloh*, their Gen. 49. 10.

their *Messias*. He, *Unto whom the gather-*
Vers. 10. *ing of the People was to be*; He, towards whom all the Antient Ages of GOD's Church before him, did look forward, and upon whom all the Ages of it since, have look'd back: The former Times to foretel him; the later Times to reveal him; both to Believe in, and to be Saved by him alone; for which end, and with respect to him, all the Miseries and Joys of Eternity it self, are provided, and accordingly, shall be dispens'd, to punish those that Reject him, to reward those that Obey him.

These, and whatever other such, magnificent Expressions of Excellency, the Holy Scriptures have attributed to our Lord, as he is *the Christ*; as they are all on the one side, so many evident Testimonies of his *Eternal Power and Godhead*; so on the other, they ought to be esteemed as so many Marvellous Degrees, and astonishing Amplifications of the Merciful Condescention of his Sufferings,

ferings, which is my next particular. This very *Chriſt ſuffer'd.*

If any ſhall now inquire, from what Period of Time we may juſtly date the Beginning of his Paſſion; without all Queſtion, his Sufferings took their Riſe from the very firſt Moment of his Aſſuming our Fleſh: Since for the Eternal Son of GOD only to become Man, was infinitely to ſuffer: That *He*, who *was in the Form of GOD, and thought it no Robbery*, but his inviolable Right, *to be equal with GOD, ſhould be made of no Reputation, and take on him the Form of a Servant, and be made in the Likeneſs of Man.* Philip. 2. 6, 7.

He was made in the Likeneſs of Man. Was not that an inexpreſſible Debaſement of the Glories of his Divinity? But, as if that were not Obſcurity, and Degradation enough, to that is added, his ſtooping down to the low, and abject Form of a *Servant.* The great GOD of Heaven, who is otherwiſe *No*

Acts 10. 34. Gal. 2. 6. *Accepter, or Respecter of Persons among Men,* nor does he prefer the highest before the lowest, upon any inequality of our Conditions here below; yet, when he himself was to put on our Humanity, he then became, as it were, an Accepter of Persons on the other side, and chose to appear in the vilest, and most despicable State among the Children of Men; which is, that of *a Servant*, and the being *made of no Reputation.*

Thus, with his very taking our Nature, did his *Sufferings* begin; and thence were continued through all the humble Circumstances of his Birth, and Kindred, and Conversation; through a Life of Poverty, Simplicity, and Self-Denial; and as the Evangelical Prophet describes him, *As a* Isai. 53. 3 *Man of Sorrows, acquainted with Grief; despised and rejected of Men:* Till he came at length to that, which still deserves Emphatically to be call'd, *His Passion*; when Vers. 4. he was also *smitten of God, and afflicted*, to his

his dreadful Conflict with GOD, and himself in the Garden, and his Sweating Drops of Blood there; to the Buffetings, the Revilings, the Scourges, the Spittings, *the contradiction of Sinners he endured*: The Cruel Insolency of his Enemies; the fierce Rage of the Superstitious *Jews*; the Tyrannous Scorn of the *Romans*; the Theives Crucifi'd with him; the Murderer preferr'd before him; the Gall and Vineger given him to Drink; the Nails in his Hands; the Spear in his Side; the very August Name of King, objected to him in Contempt; the Painful and Shameful Crown of Thorns put on his Head, with Ignominious Mockery: And, at last, that inutterable Torment darted into his very Soul immediately from GOD himself, which compell'd him for a time, almost to Despair, and to sink under its Weight. Sure we are, it made him cry out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

Hebr. 12.3.

St. Matt. 27.46.

In that black and dismal Moment of

his expiring on the Croſs, what inſupportable *Suffering* muſt his have been, which could even appear to ſtagger ſuch a Faith, and eclipſe his Aſſurance of the Preſence and Love of his *heavenly Father!*

How many Deaths, and extream Agonies of Death muſt he then have felt! When, as the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſays, *The Lord laid on him the Iniquity of us all:* And as St. *Peter* here expreſſes it, *He his own ſelf bore our Sins in his own Body on the Tree?* And not only ours, but the Sins of the whole World; ſince St. *Paul* has alſo taught us in his own Perſon, that every Sinner, as ſuch, carries no leſs a Load about with him, than a whole *Body of Death!*

Iſai. 53. 6.
1 St. Pet. 2. 24.

Certainly the bare mention of our Lord's *thus ſuffering*, though ſo plainly related, could not but convince any indifferent, and unconcern'd Perſon paſſing by, that *never any Sorrow was like his Sorrow.* But there is ſtill ſomething more behind, that methinks ſhould never permit

Rom. 7. 24.

mit any of the Sons and Daughters of Men to pass it by as indifferent, and unconcern'd: And that is the third part of my Text, He *suffer'd* all this *for us*.

For us he suffer'd. For himself he could not die. *Death is the Wages of Sin*; and *the sting of Death is Sin.* Death could have no Dominion over him on that account: *He did no Sin.* But if any of us shall say so of our selves, *The Truth is not in us.* Wherefore *for us*, or which is all one, *for our Sins*, in our place, *he suffer'd.* Rom. 6. 23. 1 Cor. 15. 56.

All Sin must be acknowledg'd to be a breach of the Wise, Holy, and Upright Law of GOD: And for every breach of such a Law, a severe Punishment is due, unless some fitting Expiation be made. And that He only could have perform'd. Could any other Creatures for us? Alas! all their value bears no proportion to such a Forfeiture. However, such as they are, we had no right to use them to that purpose, since GOD alone,

alone, not we, had the Propriety in them before. Nor could we our ſelves have made an Equitable Satisfaction. Alas! Were it not for this Redeemer, we had wanted an Atonement not only for our Iniquities, but for our beſt Righteouſneſs.

Wherefore ſeeing neither we our ſelves, nor any other for us, could contribute any juſt Price towards our Redemption; to whom could we have recourſe? Whither ſhould we flee for Refuge, but to that *one GOD, and one Mediator between GOD and Man, the Man Chriſt Jeſus?* Flee to him we did not neither: Nor could we firſt; rather he ſought us out, found, overtook us fleeing from him. In that deplorable Condition the *Good Samaritan had Compaſſion on us*, weltring in our Blood, in our Sins that required his Blood; *To bind up our Wounds, and heal our Braiſes, and love us freely*: Freely it muſt have been, or not at all.

1 Tim. 2. 5.

St. Luk. 10. 33.

Hoſ. 14. 4.

Thus

Thus *for us*, incompaſs'd with innumerable Frailties and Corruptions; contaminated with ſo many Pollutions of Original and Actual Sins; blacken'd with ſo many repeated Ingratitudes towards Heaven: *For us*, ſinful Men. Men! ſinful *Duſt and Aſhes*; *Worms and no Men*; (for ſo the Scripture accounts of every Sinner; condemns him to have loſt the very common Privilege of being a Man; which at beſt is no great Matter to boaſt of, as Man has made himſelf: For *Man* does but *walk in a vain Shadow*, whereas Sin makes him worſe than a Shadow; *worſe than the very Beaſts that periſh*; and of Beaſts the moſt contemptible, even a Worm of the Earth:) However, *for us*, in this dejected and depraved Condition, *Chriſt* undertook, *Chriſt ſuffer'd*: Not only became our Interceſſor, our Pledge, our Ranſom, our Surety; but our Propitiatory Offering, our Bloody Sacrifice; to atone *for us*, by undergoing *himſelf* the Divine Vengeance. What

Pſal. 22. 6.

Pſal. 39.

What ſhall we ſay then? If our Lord's *Suffering* in this terrible manner, was able to ſhake the whole Frame of the Viſible World, as it did; if it could diſorder the very Inanimate and Inſenſible Parts of it, though they were altogether Innocent of its Guilt: If it could rend the Veil of the Temple, and ſplit the Rocks, and darken the Sun, and overſpread the Face of the Earth with thick Darkneſs, and open the Graves, and make Dead Bodies ariſe, and walk abroad: What powerful Effect then? And, What irreſiſtible Influence ſhould all this have upon us? Who, in as much as we are all Sinners, had but too great a ſhare in being the Cauſes of his thus *Suffering*.

What paſſionate Relentings, What vehement Deſires, What fervent Longings ſhould the Remembrance of all this excite in our Souls towards him? What Carefulneſs; yea, What clearing of our ſelves; yea, *What Indignation*; *yea, What Fear*;

2 Cor. 7. 11.

Fear; *yea*, *What Zeal*; *yea*, *What Revenge*, againſt Sin and Iniquity, that occaſioned all This? What *Reſolutions of better Obedience*, What Vigilancy, What Prayers, What Tears, What Vows for the future ſhould it Solemnly engage us in, againſt thoſe our Tranſgreſſions, which coſt him ſo Dear, no leſs than his Immaculate Blood, and weigh'd down for a Time, his Righteous Soul into Hell?

Thus *Chriſt Suffer'd for us*, to pay an Ineſtimable Price for our Demerits; and by his own Merits, to make us Sinners acceptable in the Sight of God, who *is of purer Eyes, than to behold Iniquity.* Hab. 1. 13.

But, may we now ſafely conclude from hence, That the whole deſign of our Redemption, was abſolutely finiſh'd between God, and Him, and Us, merely by *his Suffering for us?* Yes, entirely, as to the Meritorious part of it, tho' we ſhould all beware of Negligence, or Preſumption, on that Account: For there ſtill re-

mains enough to be done on our part.

His ſhare was in Truth, All in All, and All in every Part. It was completely to purchaſe Salvation for us. But then muſt begin, and then only can begin, our ſhare, which is ſtill, To *Work out that Salvation.* So that although, all our Working can only proceed on the ſure Foundation of his Purchaſe: Yet withal, it muſt indiſpenſably proceed thereupon. And let us not be deceiv'd; if, as we are told, even our beſt *Working* in this Life, cannot be without ſome *Fear and Trembling*, What will our not Working at all be?

Phil. 2. 12.

Conſider I beſeech you, The Free Grace of our LORD's Redeeming Mankind by his Blood, *The Blood of the New and Everlaſting Covenant*, as large and diffuſive as it is, yet can be of no Conſequence to us in Particular, but to aggravate our Condemnation for neglecting it, unleſs we not only Accept and Apprehend it by Faith, but Embrace and Cheriſh

Heb. 10. 29. 13. 20.

riſh it with a Living Faith. And then Faith only lives in an Evangelical Senſe, not only when it Breaths and Profeſſes, but when it Moves and Works, then it moſt Lives, when it Operates Vigorouſly in a Conſcientious Obedience to his Precepts, and a Diligent and Dutiful Conformity to his Example: Which is the Reaſon, my Text aſſigns, of our LORD's *Suffering for us*, that he might *leave us an Example*, and *we* ſhould *follow his Steps*.

We know there are ſome, that call themſelves Chriſtians, who rejecting the great Fundamental Doctrine of our LORD's Suffering for us, as a Propitiatory Sacrifice, allow no other End of his Coming, and Living, and Dying in the Fleſh, but that he might ſhew us the way to Heaven, by his Teaching, and *Example*.

I need not, in this Audience, labour to confute this; or to prove *Chriſt*'s

having been a Real Sacrifice, and the on
ly ſufficient Atonement for Sin, *by him*
Heb. 9. 28. *ſelf once offer'd:* Since in the whole Te
nour of the Goſpel, eſpecially in S
Paul's Epiſtles, and that to the *Hebrews*
this Truth ſeems to be ſo perſpicuouſly
confirm'd. Only let me add, his being
offer'd to GOD, as our Sacrifice, was a
thing ſo Neceſſary, that without it, it
Vain had He been propoſed to us, as
our *Example:* Both theſe great Inten
tions of his Suffering, being ſo inſepara
bly Mixt and United, that whereve
they ſhall be found divided, neither o
them can be Effectual. *Chriſt* could ne
ver have been to us a Pattern of Ho
lineſs, ſuch as we could have had the
leaſt hope to follow, had He not alſo been
a Propitiation for our Sins. And that
Propitiation will prevail with the *Righte
ous Judge of all the World*, only for ſuch
as, in ſome Degree, or other, ſincerely
Practice after his Pattern.

Upon

Upon no leſs, nor any other Conditi-ons, has He undertaken to cleanſe and reſ-cue us from the Guilt and Slavery of our Sins, but only, as we ſhall ſtrive to exerciſe that Capacity, which He has alſo obtain'd for us, of *following the Steps* of his Graces.

It muſt be Confeſs'd, without his Righteouſneſs imputed to us, we can never be Juſtifi'd in the Sight of God. And his Righteouſneſs is never impu-ted to any, but only thoſe, by whom either, in Deed, or in Will, it is Imita-ted. I ſay, not only in Deed, but in Will, becauſe our Gracious GOD, who worketh in us both to Will, and to Do of his Good Pleaſure, is ſometimes pleas'd, *To accept the Will for the Deed*: But never ſo, as thereby to give us any Incouragement to come ſhort of, or to omit the Deed. Phil. 2. 13.

I ſay then again, our Bleſſed LORD can never be a comfortable *Example*, but only

only to those, for whom He was a Sacrifice. And He never suffer'd effectually for any as a Sacrifice, but such, as unfeignedly desire, and endeavor, to make Him their *Example.*

This being granted, that it highly concerns every one that *calls on the Name of Christ*, not only to trust in Him as our Redeemer, but to *follow His Steps* as our *Example.* It will next be very well worth our while to examine carefully, where we may find an accurate Copy of that *Example:* In what Holy ground we are to search, for the Genuine Marks of those Heavenly *Steps* we are to tread in.

For that, the Greek Word in my Text, which is translated *Example*, may suggest to us a certain Rule of Direction in this whole Matter: The Word is ὑπογραμμὸν, that is, such a Type, Prescript, and Original Draught, as is left us in Writing, whence we may transcribe it into our Lives.

So that you see, St. *Peter* was not content

tent to leave us a mere uncertain hear-ſay, changeable, traditionary Doctrine of our Lord's Example; but ſuch a One, as being at firſt taken as near the Life as could be, was then written down, once for all finiſhed, and *once delivered to the Saints*, as indeed every part of it is demonſtrably to be ſhewn in the Holy Word of GOD, which is our fix'd Standard of all Truth and Goodneſs, and next to *Chriſt* and His Spirit, our only Infallible Guide of Faith and Manners. St. Jude v. 3.

This, ſays our Apoſtle, is the Example. *He has left us*, for *you to follow:* Conſign'd it firſt into our Truſt, and our Recording, who were Eye-witneſſes of all, by us to be faithfully tranſmitted down to you, the Saints of all Ages to come. An Example moſt Holy, and moſt Worthy, both of our and your Imitation, in that *He did no Sin.*

So my Text proceeds to make out the Perfection of His *Example.* But here, alas!

alas! we muſt ſtop, when *He took on Himſelf our other Infirmities*; yet, *Sin was excepted.* He was a ſpotleſs *Example* to us of Holineſs: But ſuch as we can never be to one another. 'Twere Blaſphemy in us to imagine, that we can ever be Exempt from Sin in any Degree of Equality with him: Well were it for us, if we might be ſo, in ſome Degree of Reſemblance to Him.

And let us not Deſpair, for that we may be, if we ſhall do what we are here adviſ'd, and what, through His Grace we may do: If we ſhall ſtill have him in our View, and Write, and Speak, and Live after the perfect Copy of ſo great a Maſter; and ſtedfaſtly follow his Steps, though it be only, as his Friends and *Acquaintance* followed him to the Croſs, *afar off.* However, if we ſhall keep his Example unmoveably before our Eyes, and perpetually ſtrive to Walk anſwerably to it; then, whatever we ſhall Do,

Luk. 23. 49.

or

or Speak, or Think well, though very imperfectly, he will accept; and, where through Human Weakneſs, we ſhall fail, he, out of the inexhauſtible Riches of his own Mercy, will ſupply all the Good that is wanting, and pardon all the Ill that remains.

An Example ſeems to be ſome viſible Image, or ſenſible Pattern of ſomething extraordinary in its kind; ſo exhibited to common Obſervation, that others may direct their practiſe by it, and learn to excel in the ſame kind.

And great is the force of Examples: Great on both Sides; either in leading us to Good, or ſeducing us to Evil.

By common Experience, Examples are found to have far greater Influence on the Minds and Actions of Men, than the moſt Excellent Precepts ſingly deliver'd.

Examples have a Natural, Living, and vigorous Efficacy, by Secret and Fami-

liar Charms, they are generally wont to insinuate much farther, than the best Commands, or Intreaties, or Incouragements by themselves can reach.

Whilst the Wisest Laws can only prescribe and require Obedience, by threatning Punishments, or promising Rewards, good Examples do more softly affect the Passions, and captivate the Imagination, and gently frame the Will to themselves: Convincing Mens Understandings, that the Good ought to be done by the bright lustre attending all Goodness, when brought into Example; and also proving to our very Eyes and Senses, that it has been done by others, and therefore may be done by us, if it be not our own fault; and shewing the easiest Method, and most graceful Manner of doing it.

Since therefore in all things relating to Practise, Examples have so prevalent an Authority, much more than any other way of Teaching; let me seriously Recommend

mend to you all, the *following* this moſt Conſummate Pattern of *our Lord*, and the being made like to him, above all other Examples: A Duty ſo Incumbent on all Chriſtians, that our very firſt Initiation into his Faith, our Baptiſm obliges us to it, as the diſtinguiſhing Badge and Character of our Holy Profeſſion.

And let me aſſure you, Great, Happy, and Illuſtrious, would ſoon be the Benefits of ſuch an imitating Chriſtianity: Such as ſhall Teach us, in the firſt place, moſt ſtudiouſly to imitate *Chriſt* himſelf; and next him, his Diſciples, Apoſtles, and firſt Companions, *To be followers of them*, according to St. *Paul's* Rule, concerning himſelf, *as they were of Chriſt*.

This would undoubtedly make us Diſciples of Chriſt, according to his own Heart, who has declared himſelf to be not only the Truth, but *the Way, the Truth, and the Life*. St. John 14.6.

This would ſpeedily take off our Minds

from eager Diſputes, and fierce Emulations; and employ them about plain and unqueſtionable Truths and Duties. This would quickly abate much of the vehement and tumultuous Spirit of Zeal, but increaſe the temperate Heat, and uſeful Fire of it. This would ſoon allay and ſweeten all that Sharpneſs, Sowerneſs, and Peeviſhneſs of Conſcience, which ſo generally prevails, and change it into a Conſcience void of Offence towards God and Man. This would incline Men rather to be innocent, and holy themſelves, by conſtant looking towards Him, who was ſo, than to find fault curiouſly, or to object ſubtily againſt others: Rather to be induſtrious in doing well, as He did, than to be critical in blaming what others do amiſs.

This, in ſhort, is the beſt way to reſtore the Primitive Power of the Goſpel, by reſtoring the Primitive Method of its wonderful Riſe, Increaſe and Progreſs.

This,

This, in ſtead of making all Practiſe evaporate in Speculation, would more profitably reduce Speculation into Practiſe. This would bring Religion more into publick View and Notice, and by conſequence more into Credit and Faſhion. And whereas nothing can be a greater Scandal to any Church, than for the Members of it to be Rigid in their Cenſures of others, and yet looſe in their own *Examples*; This would make the Lovelineſs of our *Examples* to correſpond with, and even to adorn the Beauty of our Churches Doctrines and Precepts.

Give me leave to urge this yet farther, with a ſpecial regard to You of this Place. For You thus indefatigably to Copy after this Bleſſed *Example* of our Lord *Chriſt*, were the certain means for You to prove the greateſt Bleſſings to the whole Nation wherein You live; that is, to become Good, as well as Great *Examples* to it: You I mean, many of whom GOD has placed

placed in ſo high a rank of Dignity and Honour in this World, that whither You will or no, whatever You do, Your Practiſe cannot but be a powerful *Example* to others.

Wherefore, in the Name of GOD, let us all raiſe up our Thoughts, and make our Imitation Aſpire and Aſcend towards Him, who *is the Author and Finiſher of our Faith*; who *has Aſcended on High, and has led Captivity Captive, and has receiv'd Gifts for Men; yea, for the Rebellious* alſo; *That the Lord God might* not only teach us by his Doctrine, but *dwell among us* by his Example.

Heb. 12.2.

Pſal. 68.18.

To this End, we all have, or may have in our Hands this Bleſſed Book of the New Teſtament of his Blood. Here only is to be found, St. *Peter*'s Ὑπογραμμὸς, the uncorrupt Original, and native Comlineſs of his Holy Life and Death. Hence only let us take it, as from a pure and unmixt Fountain. Let us often revolve

volve in our Minds, and Imprint deeply this unerring *Idea* of him on our Hearts. Let us inceſſantly Compare, Meaſure, Judge of, and Correct all our Thoughts, Words and Actions, according to the Exactneſs of this Model.

As we ſhould always Adore, and Worſhip all his inimitable Praiſes and Perfections; ſo let us alſo imitate all his imitable Graces. Let us moſt imitate thoſe of them, that are moſt fitted to our peculiar Conditions. So let us imitate them altogether, that our Zeal for ſome of them may not make us averſe from any of the reſt.

So let us obſerve his Mortifications, as not to neglect his Charity. Nor let our Love of his Communicative Goodneſs exclude our Obſervance of his ſeverer Inſtitutions. Rather let us carefully mingle them all in our practiſe, as he did in his. As he did, let us harmoniouſly joyn the good Duties of Society with

with thoſe of Retirement; the private Devotions of Solitude with the Diſtributive Virtues of Converſation.

Thus, in every Step of his irreprovable Life and Death, we ſhall not fail to meet with ſomething excellent, and moſt proper for us to trace out, and delineate in every Step of ours. When we find him in the Stable, or the Manger, have we not his great Humility? When in the Throngs, and Aſſemblies of the City, his Mild, Charitable, and Blameleſs Behaviour to ſet before our Eyes? When among Publicans and Sinners, his gentle Gravity, and winning Authority in reproving Wickedneſs and Licentiouſneſs: When with the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, his avowed contempt of proud Singularity, and cenſorious Hypocriſie: When in the Temple, his fervent Zeal: When in his Journeys by Sea or Land, his going about doing good: When alone in the Wilderneſs, his unaffected Sanctity, and

and meek Severity: Every where we have his Innocency, his Temperance, his Modesty, his Affability, his Justice, his Mercy and Universal Beneficence.

But, as this Day most requires, since we have now seen him in his Agony in the Garden; in the Judgment-Hall Accus'd and Condemn'd; and thenceforth *brought as a Lamb to the Slaughter, and as a Sheep before her Shearers is dumb, so opening not his Mouth*; so meekly, either bearing the Cross himself, or Crucify'd on it: *When he was Reviled, Reviling not again*; *When he Suffer'd, Threatning not*; *but committing himself to him that judgeth Righteously*: And since (according to the Words immediately foregoing my Text) *This is acceptable to God*; *for even hereunto were we call'd*: Now particularly let us learn to imitate his Patience, Equanimity, and Long-Suffering; his *forgiving Injuries, and loving Enemies*; *His Blessing them that Curs'd him*; *His Praying for them who De-*

Isaiah 53.7.

1 St. Pet. 2.23.

Vers. 20, 21.

ſpitefully uſed him, and Perſecuted him; and laſtly, his entire Obedience to the Will of Heaven, expreſs'd in that moſt admirable Word of Submiſſion, amidſt ſuch ineffable Tortures, *Not as I will, but as Thou wilt.*

And if we ſhall thus follow his Gracious Steps to Mount *Calvary*, we ſhall alſo ſhortly follow him to Mount *Olivet*: If we ſhall thus be Partakers of his Death,
Verſ. 24. *by dying to Sin*, we ſhall alſo be Partakers of his Reſurrection, *by living to Righteouſneſs here, to Glory hereafter*; Which I beſeech Almighty GOD to Grant us all. *Amen.*

FINIS.